

AGENDA ITEM IV B

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AND A&M COLLEGE

B. S. IN ELECTRONIC BUSINESS

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BACKGROUND

The Board of Regents approved Southern University's Letter of Intent to develop the proposed baccalaureate program on May 23, 2002. Since then, the University decided also to develop an M.B.A. program in Electronic Commerce. The Letter of Intent for M.B.A. program was approved by the Board of Regents on May 22, 2003.

STAFF SUMMARY

1. Objectives

Located in a Department of Management and Marketing, the proposed program is designed to produce graduates who are competitive for entry-level positions in electronic business environments and who are prepared for advanced study in related fields. It is also designed as a feeder program for a proposed M.B.A. program in Electronic Commerce, still in development, which would prepare graduates for work at a more advanced managerial level.

2. Curriculum

The program is composed of a general education component (59 hrs.), core courses in business (39 hrs.), major coursework in electronic business (24 hrs.), and free electives (6 hrs.). Total: 128 credit hours. Major coursework is composed of eight courses. Six of these are required:

- Management of Business Databases
- Development of Business Information Systems
- Advanced Business Software Packages
- Supply Chain Management
- Electronic Commerce
- Business-to-Business E-Commerce.

The two major elective courses may be chosen from the following:

- Decision Support for Management
- Business Data Communications and Networking

- On-Line Payment Systems and Security
- Internet Marketing

Regarding the curriculum, in-state reviewers inquired as to what processes or means of advisory support are in place to ensure that the program's curriculum and course content evolve appropriately to keep pace with industry. The university responded:

The need for continuous updating of curriculum is fully appreciated by the faculty in the College of Business. The faculty members meet with executives and senior managers from business and industry such as Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, 3M, ExxonMobil, etc. on a regular basis to get their input regarding the technical and managerial skills our students need to develop in order to be competitive in the job market. In fact, we have discussed the curriculum... with the executives of Procter & Gamble at Cincinnati, and they fully concur with the proposed curriculum.

The staff asked to what extent internship possibilities have been explored. The University responded:

We have been able to develop relationships for our students with respect to internships with the public and private sectors in the e-business area. Firms such as Dow Chemical and small business entrepreneurs that participated in the Minority Serving Institutions Conference have indicated their willingness to consider graduates from this program for internships and employment. [...] We have visited government agencies such as the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., where representatives expressed interest in our e-business proposal, especially the supply chain management component of the program. They would like more information and are interested in an internship program with the College.

Staff and in-state reviewers also had concerns about the sequencing and content of coursework. The University has addressed all such concerns appropriately.

2. Students

Based on enrollment data for analogous (e.g., Management of Information Systems) programs at other public colleges and universities in the state, the University projects the following aggregated enrollment and graduation figures for the proposed program:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Enrollment (FTE)	25	50	75	100	125
Graduates	0	25	50	75	100

3. Faculty

Four full-time faculty in the College of Business are expected to be directly associated with this program. Three such faculty with Ph.D. credentials are in place; their credentials are on file in the Board of Regents Division of Academic Affairs. The fourth faculty member may be selected from a pool of applicants whose on-campus interviews are scheduled for this month (January) and next. The University has expressed confidence that this fourth position will be filled in time for the faculty member to start at the end of this academic year. This fourth addition would allow the faculty to offer two of the eight required major courses each semester over a two-year period, ensuring that students have the opportunity of moving through the program in a timely fashion.

4. Facilities and Equipment

Library resources supporting the proposed program were commended for volume references and technology during the University's reaffirmation review by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges in 2000. It should also be noted that library facilities were also judged adequate by the American Association of Colleges of Business (AACSB), which by Board of Regents policy is the mandatory accrediting agency for schools of business statewide.

Existing classroom space allocated to the Department of Management and Marketing will be used for the proposed program. Each classroom is wired for internet access. The College of Business has three computer laboratories with software to support the proposed curriculum such as IMPLAN (impact analysis for planning) software, and LINDO Systems software (for linear and nonlinear computing required for creating optimization models).

The University also reports that it "is also in the process of acquiring SAP that will be incorporated into the current offerings where possible." SAP is reportedly one of the larger, if not the largest, software company for businesses. When asked whether students will learn about other vendor systems, the University responded:

We will ensure that the students trained in one type of application package, for example, SAP (Enterprise Resource Planning Software), will be equally comfortable using a product from a different vendor such as PeopleSoft. This will be achieved by incorporating in our pedagogy, a sound theoretical background that is common to an application rather than to a particular brand.

Specific course objectives and course descriptions in the proposal and subsequent documentation confirm that this pedagogy is indeed the University's approach.

5. Administration

The program will be administered by the Department of Management and Marketing in the College of Business and "will not warrant any increase in administrative resources," according to the University.

6. Accreditation

Accreditation of the proposed program is mandatory according to Board of Regents policy. The program will be reviewed by the AACSB as part of that agency's normal reaffirmation review of the College of Business as a whole in 2007.

7. Budget

Projected Costs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
E-Business Faculty	185,000	190,550	196,267	202,154	208,219
Benefits (19.29%)	35,687	36,757	37,860	38,996	40,165
Prof. Development		15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Consultants	10,000	10,000			
Library & Software		25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Furniture & Fixtures					
Travel		10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Operating Services	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Supplies	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total	\$245,687	\$302,307	\$299,127	\$306,150	\$313,384
Projected Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Tuition and Fees	86,873	173,745	260,618	347,490	434,363
State Funds	125,550	251,100	376,650	502,200	627,750
Gov. I.T. Initiative	290,000	290,000			
Title III Funding	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total	\$602,423	\$814,845	\$737,268	\$949,690	\$1,162,113
Less Projected Costs	- \$245,687	\$302,307	\$299,126	\$306,150	\$313,384
Revenue over Costs	\$356,736	\$512,538	\$438,141	\$643,540	\$848,729

STAFF ANALYSIS

The curriculum structure and content are sound, consistent with Board policy, in line with established norms, reasonably different from analogous programs in the state, and sensitive to expressed needs of industry. Student interest in the program is evident. Enrollment projections are optimistic; the University should consider alternative means of funding the program if enrollment projections are not met, particularly past the program's second year of implementation. Faculty are well-qualified, and plans for hiring one additional faculty are well underway. Facilities and resources appear to be adequate for program initiation; the continued development of learning resources (e.g., acquisition of new software) is ongoing. The administrative plan is reasonable. Accreditation plans are appropriate. The budget is reasonable if enrollment projections are realized.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic And Student Affairs Committee grant approval for the proposed Bachelor of Science in Electronic Business program (CIP 52.1205) at Southern University and A&M College, effective immediately. On August 1, 2005, the University shall submit an implementation report to the Commissioner of Higher Education about the program's enrollment, budget, and contingency funding plans.